

Francophone and Francophile Cities Network 2016-2018 Proposed Evolving Strategic Plan

BACKGROUND

***The Francophones of America: A Community of Shared Destinies*¹**

“The root is old, and runs across the vast continent. French was often the first European language learned by the indigenous peoples. They remember it in the land of the Dene and the Sioux, they remember it everywhere, from Colorado to the Yukon, from California to Newfoundland. The names of places, the family names—they are all still there. The traces endure, the memories persist. There isn’t a corner of Canada that doesn’t have some kind of ties with French history. I’m speaking of course of those strong original communities: the Acadians, Fransaskois, Franco-Manitobans, Franco-Ontarians, and all those other versions of ourselves. As the source and cradle of French civilization, Québec obviously leads the way, along with Acadia. But it bears repeating that it’s no longer a question of statistics and numbers. Wherever we find ourselves, there we are. The U.S. is no stranger to this great saga. Did not millions of francophones play a part in the defining moments in the history of our neighbors to the south?

...

It’s true that it’s a difficult story to tell. Because a story that never gets told inevitably ends up dissipating like dust in the forgotten mazes of the mind. Today, duty and passion compel us to gather and reassemble the pieces, to patiently rebuild the puzzle of our torn family portrait.”

Cities Linked Historically, Culturally, and Economically to the French Language

Ties with French language and culture are the outcome of a historically rich and extremely significant process spread over four centuries.

*Ever since Samuel de Champlain brought the accent of France to the New World over 400 years ago, Francophones have set down roots across the continent, from East to West and from North to South.*²

Through exploration, commerce, and migration, the French, Acadians, French Canadians, and francophone Quebecers crisscrossed Canada and the United States. Everywhere they went, they helped found and build new settlements, which prospered and grew into our modern Canadian and American cities. To this day, bonds are still being formed and French language and culture are showcased across the continent by artisans, artists, and entrepreneurs—our Francophone and Francophile cultural ambassadors.

Francophone migrants, merchants, and explorers helped found and develop many Canadian and American cities and towns that still bear traces of French influence today. They include Orleans, Ontario; St. Boniface, Manitoba; Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, Plamondon, Alberta; and Maillardville, British Columbia, as well as U.S. capitals and cities such as Baton Rouge, Beaumont, Bel Air, Boise, Des Moines, Detroit, Dubuque, Eau Claire, Fayetteville, Joliet, La Crosse, Lafayette, New Orleans, New Rochelle, Montpelier, Provo, Racine, St. Louis, and Terre Haute.

¹ Translated conference by Serge Bouchard. Forum de la francophonie canadienne. La francophonie @ cœur. Québec City. May 28, 2012.

² Speech by Mayor Régis Labeaume. Ministerial Conference on Canadian Francophonie. June 2015

French Language Still Very Present in America

"The French culture in the Americas is a historical and geographical reality. Today, what we call French America is presented as a set of language and cultural derivatives whose boundaries usually remain invisible. Yet this Franco-America dispersal continues to resist and assert its differences, to structure its language and claim its Francophone identity. Across the continent, sometimes in isolated communities, French heritage resonates. From Acadian shores to the vast prairies of Western Canada, through Louisiana and the Caribbean, French in America continues to vibrate, to laugh, to cry, to dance, to sing and to live.³ "

Did you know that some 33 million Francophones⁴ live in the Americas?

- 9.6 million in Canada;
- 11 million in the United States;
- 200,300 in Mexico;
- 9.7 million in the Caribbean area;
- 2.6 million in Central and South America.

An Increasing Number of Francophiles

Did you also know that a growing number of people whose first language is not French are interested in the French language and culture? These Francophiles which can be defined as persons for whom French is not their first language, or who speak French fluently, or a little or maybe not at all, but who are interested in French for a variety of reasons. Curious, in love with the French language, often passionate about culture, many see in the French language a language of discovery, a language that opens doors to the unknown, to history, to the great currents of thought and creativity, to research and to a better understanding of the world around them.

In recent years, we have noted increased enrollments in French as a second language and French immersion school programs in both Canada and the United States. Furthermore, a study identified 900 francophone and Francophile associations in America. This includes associations such as Circle of Parents for French in Ottawa (23,000 members), the American Association of Teachers of French⁵, Chicago (10,000 members) and the Committee of French Associations of New York (54 member associations).⁶

Fluent or not in French, many Francophiles will view the Francophone and Francophile Cities Network as a unique opportunity and resource to express and raise their interest in French culture and heritage.

³ Centre de la francophonie des Amériques. <http://www.francophoniedesameriques.com/la-francophonie-dans-les-ameriques/> Page consulted October 20th, 2015.

⁴ Centre de la francophonie des Amériques. <http://www.francophoniedesameriques.com/la-francophonie-dans-les-ameriques/> Reference to a study conducted in 2013 by Étienne Rivard, Scientific coordinator, Centre interuniversitaire d'études québécoises (CIEQ), Université Laval. Page consulted October 20th, 2015.

⁵ American Association of Teachers of French. <https://www.frenchteachers.org/>

⁶ L'Actualité. Nadeau, Jean-Benoît <http://www.lactualite.com/culture/diplomate-de-la-francophonie/> 14 août. 2009.

Creation of the Network of Francophone and Francophile Cities

An initiative introduced by the mayor of Québec City and supported by the mayors of Lafayette and Moncton, will encourage cities and communities with historic, cultural, and linguistic ties to French culture to share their stories with each other and the world. The creation of this network could be a unique resource for Francophones and Francophiles who are interested in their history, language, and ancestry.

There is a growing interest in cultural tourism as well as memorial tourism, heritage tourism and even, genealogy tourism (refer to Annex), so why not bring together community actors and stakeholders to offer those who are passionate about French culture and heritage genuine tourist circuits?

The Francophone and Francophile Cities Network is a key project with the potential to generate benefits in areas of tourism, culture, heritage and economy for its members and for Francophone and Francophile communities.

Ébauche

MISSION

Francophone and Francophile Cities Network

An informal network of Francophone and Francophile cities that design and develop collaborative projects, build partnerships, and create links to promote tourism and increase the economic, linguistic, and cultural development of member cities, thus strengthening the vitality of Francophone communities and preserving their shared heritage.

The mayors of the founding cities: Québec City, Moncton, and Lafayette

VISION

The Francophone and Francophile Cities Network is an innovative vector for tourism, economic, linguistic and cultural development.

STRATEGIC OVERALL OUTCOMES

Outcome 1

Members of the Network work together to preserve and promote shared French heritage and culture.

Outcome 2

Through this informal and dynamic network, cities join forces and collaborate to generate productive relationships that benefit the touristic, cultural, and economic sectors for their cities and communities.

Outcome 3

Through the Network, Francophone and Francophile cities develop and promote unique tourist circuits based on their historic, linguistic, genealogic, economic, and cultural ties with the French culture.

Outcome 4

Member cities have privileged access to the vast potential of Francophone and Francophile tourists from all over Quebec, America and worldwide.

Outcome 5

Member cities have access to new tools for developing and promoting their tourist circuits and attractions as well as their cultural products.

LOGIC MODEL 2016 - 2018

Short Term Results 2016-2017

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Leaders of member cities are made aware of the value of their cities' historic, linguistic, cultural and economic ties with French heritage. 2. The member cities facilitate the sharing of knowledge and know-how (technical, technological, cultural, social, management, etc.). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A forum for dialogue and discussion is created in Québec City for member cities and their partners. 2. The Francophone and Francophile Cities Network is founded and gains momentum. 3. Network members agree on joint strategic outcomes (strategic plan). 4. A central office is established to coordinate and support the Network and to ensure receipt and dissemination of information, tools and products. 5. Support networks for economic, tourist, and cultural development are created. 6. The network explores the possibility of holding a meeting of the Network in Québec City, in 2017, as part of the 150th anniversary of Canadian Confederation. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An inventory is taken of historical and commemorative sites and products and other marks that testify to the Francophone contribution. 2. Links between member cities and the French culture are identified and strengthened. 3. Attractions in Francophone and Francophile cities are developed, enhanced, and promoted. 4. Cities forge strategic and economic alliances with local businesses and organizations involved in economic, tourist, and cultural development. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Travel agencies, tourist transport companies, and tourism development corporations are informed about the attractions and tourist circuits in member cities. 2. Potential tourists are informed about member city attractions and tourist circuits. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The online platform is launched. 2. Network member cities sign up for and contribute to the online platform. 3. Member cities have exclusive access to databases and toolboxes like <i>Le Carnet de la Francophonie</i> and the digital library. 4. The online platform highlights best practices and provides tools to promote francophone cities (for example, Québec City is organizing access to a digital library, access to <i>Éléphant</i>—a database of restored films transferred to a digital medium, access to <i>Lire nous transport</i>, and free limited access to YourFolks.com).
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Midterm Results 2017–2018

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Network member cities build productive relationships with volunteer-based and community organizations involved in preserving and promoting French culture. 2. A historical overview of French heritage is published and distributed. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A growing number of cities join the Network. 2. A growing number of collaborative projects are initiated by member cities and their partners. 3. More and more new products are introduced by member cities. 4. Member cities generate economic, tourist and cultural missions. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A genuine and virtual network of tourist circuits implemented. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Channels for accessing target clientele are developed 2. Tourists are aware they have access to a unique tourism product and take advantage of it. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The platform showcases tourist attractions, circuits, and cultural products of member cities. 2. The online platform proves to be relevant for its member cities. 3. Member cities benefit from initiatives that promote their city's tourist and cultural attractions (e.g. the concept of cultural capitals).
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Strategic Overall Outcomes 2018 –

<i>Outcome 1</i>	<i>Outcome 2</i>	<i>Outcome 3</i>	<i>Outcome 4</i>	<i>Outcome 5</i>
Members of the Network work together to preserve and promote shared French heritage and culture.	Through this informal and dynamic network, cities join forces and collaborate to generate productive relationships that benefit the touristic, cultural, and economic sectors for their cities and communities.	Through the Network, francophone and Francophile cities develop and promote unique tourist routes based on their historic, linguistic, genealogic, economic, and cultural ties with the French culture.	Member cities have privileged access to the vast potential of Francophone and Francophile tourists from all over Quebec, America and worldwide.	Member cities have access to new tools for developing and promoting their tourist circuits and attractions as well as their cultural products.

Member City Commitment to Other Network Members

Each city is invited to:

- Join the Network and support its mission
- Share leadership in developing the Network in collaboration with its founding cities: Québec, Moncton, and Lafayette
- Work together to develop a strategic plan to expand the Network
- Provide relevant information about their city (history, heritage, genealogy, sites, products)
- Forge ties with other Network member cities
- Create links with local and regional community partners
- Participate in the development of tourist circuits
- Promote the Network, its products, and its tourist routes according to their capacity
- Enhance their tourist attractions with ties to the French culture
- Encourage their agencies and community partners to actively participate in the Network, in related networks, working groups and missions.
- Encourage alliances with the economic partners
- Share new tools and products

Québec City's Leadership at the Service of the Network and its Members

Québec City, in close collaboration with the Centre de la Francophonie des Amériques, commits to:

- Host the inaugural event of the Francophone and Francophile Cities Network of America from October 29–31, 2015, in Québec City.
- Set up a Web site:
 - Member city names and locations
 - Member city profiles and their links to French culture and history
 - Member city tourist attractions
 - Tourist circuits connecting member cities
- Promote the Francophone and Francophile Cities Network to its own target tourist market, including:
 - 9 million Quebecers
 - 2 million Francophones and Francophiles living in Francophone and Acadian communities in Canada
 - 11 million Francophones in the U.S.
 - 35 million residents of Canada, a country where French is an official language
 - 275 million Francophones and Francophiles across the globe
- Provide member cities with:
 - Names and contact information for member city leaders and their partners
 - Targeted tourist, cultural, historical, heritage, and genealogical information that is likely to attract potential tourists
 - A toolbox that helps them connect to the vast potential of Francophone and Francophile tourists

- Access to a digital library, access to *Éléphant*—a database of restored films transferred to a digital medium, access to *Lire vous transporte*, and free limited access to YourFolks.com (genealogy)
- Facilitate the creation of related networks for member cities and their partners in areas such as tourism, economic development, and cultural and artistic exchanges for example, historical societies, chambers of commerce, cultural and artistic agencies, businesses, and tourist development offices
- Propose a strategic plan to develop the Network and invite member cities to collaborate in its development during the inaugural event and to contribute towards its implementation
- Serve as a hub for dialogue and exchange for the Network and its related networks

Culture and tourism go hand in hand. Promotion of the former helps make a destination attractive, and the latter increases visitors to local establishments and events, further enhancing the destination's reputation.

Ministère du Tourisme, Ministère des Transports, and ATR associées du Québec
(Translation: Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Transport, and ATR Associates Quebec)

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Motivated Tourists Looking for New Attractions and Tourist Circuits

A study conducted in November 2012 by the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Transport Quebec⁷ revealed several trends in tourism:

The Search for Authenticity

The search for authenticity has emerged as a major focus in recent years. People are looking to travel as if they were locals, get to know their host communities, and experience local life. Taking the scenic route is a great way to get to know the backcountry, venture off the beaten path, and discover local culture and people. Trips with local flavor are part of a trend of consumers looking for authenticity. They are designed to put tourists in touch with local residents.

Personalization

Personalization is a growing trend in tourism. More and more travelers are looking for tailor-made experiences that provide a sense of exclusivity. Tourist circuits can tap into this trend by providing a wide range of experiences that allow people to travel at their own pace and sightsee according to their own personal preferences. This kind of flexibility is supported by available technology.

Tourist circuits are part of the slow travel movement, which encourages people to take their time, venture off the beaten path, and get to know local communities.

Baby Boomers

Baby boomers represent an important potential market for tourist circuits.

Even though baby boomers grew up in the era of mass tourism, they want to avoid the crowds, experience the out of the ordinary, reinvent the tourist experience, and venture out on their own. They demand custom itineraries and are quite comfortable with technology. They often travel to indulge a passion or a favorite pastime like yoga, meditation, painting, hiking, birdwatching, biking, gardening, sports, motorcycling or gastronomy. They love to experiment, learn, interact with others, and be out and about. Baby boomers are much more interested in a memorable experience than a traditional “vacation.”

The FIT Clientele

Tourist routes often attract Free Independent Travelers (FITs). FITs are leisure travelers who choose their destination and plan things on their own during their trip. FITs fall into two categories—travelers on a tight budget (e.g., backpackers), and travelers with a high income. The latter prefer to travel in small groups or as a couple and frequently consult travel agents for custom travel packages.

Self-sufficient Digital Consumers

More than ever, consumers are independent enough to make their own decisions. The defining factor of this era of tourism is the fact that consumers hold the power—literally—in the palm of their hand with a wide range of available online tools and apps, particularly collaborative platforms. The quantity of resources available online is

⁷ Ministère du Tourisme, Ministère des Transports, and ATR associées du Québec (Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Transport, and ATR Associates Quebec). *Soutien, recherche et analyse dans le cadre de la révision du programme de signalisation des routes et circuits touristiques. Volet 3 : Aperçu des tendances pouvant influencer l'évolution du programme québécois de signalisation des routes et des circuits touristiques*. Transat Chair in Tourism. November 2012.

so varied that the consumer is really in the driver's seat when it comes to planning a trip. Tourists' search habits are getting increasingly refined and they want advanced features to help them not only in the planning stages of a trip, but also during it.

Francophone Tourists: A Large Potential Client Base

There are currently over nine million Francophones and Francophiles living in Québec alone. Another two million people live in Francophone and Acadian communities across Canada. The U.S. is home to around 11 million Francophones. Over 35 million people live in Canada, where French is an official language. And there are more than 275 million Francophones and Francophiles living in the world today.

These Francophones and Francophiles are a reflection of our modern era. They are looking for new, authentic, enriching experiences when they travel. They are ready to invest in travel and entertainment, and are often passionate about history and genealogy.

They represent a large potential base of motivated tourists for Francophone and Francophile cities.

Ébauche